

Jobs for Montana Vets**Sponsored by Senator Mary Caferro**EXHIBIT NO. 9DATE: 2-17-2011BILL NO. SB 359**Problem**

- The trucking industry is experiencing a shortage of truck drivers.
- Ray Kuntz, CEO of Watkins Shepard Trucking states that the Montana economy could immediately absorb 500 trained drivers.
- Mr. Kuntz discussed the need for 200,000 truck drivers nationally even during this economic downturn. Carmella Campanian, Manager of Sage Truck Driving School in Billings states that the shortage of drivers may be more dramatic than described by Mr. Kuntz.
- **Why do we have a need for truck drivers?** Drivers are aging out, less drivers being trained during the recession, expected growth in the economy, and new safety regulations (CSA 2010). which will take some drivers of the road are factors that contribute to the shortage.
- Once the economy rebounds, the need for truck drivers will sky rocket and failure to prepare workers for this industry will cause economic hardship for businesses needing to transport their goods, and the shortage will impact future economic recovery in the US and Montana.
- Demand for truck driving follows the demand for goods. As demand increases in a recovering economy, carriers face a severe crunch in driver supply.
- Currently, there is a lack of funding to move returning veterans into this occupation.
- Returning veterans are frustrated with high unemployment, hollow slogans and difficult to access to federal jobs as promised.
- The unemployment rate for younger veterans (18 to 24) in the US was nearly 22 percent in 2009.
- Existing programs in two-year colleges are too long and costly for this population needing immediate employment. The labor shortage is now. Businesses need workers now.

Solution

- Veterans are loyal, hardworking and have a great work ethic.
- Montana's unemployment rate lends itself to short term training that leads to immediate employment to move individuals off the ranks of the unemployed.
- The answer is short-term intensive training that lasts no more than six weeks and costs approximately \$5000.
- Providers of this type of training include Sage and Watkins Shepard.
- Montana is uniquely suited to training truckers for driving in all types of weather, mountains and only a day away from driving in big city traffic.
- New truck drivers can expect to earn \$45,000 to \$55,000 per year.
- Eligible individual must be 1) a Montana resident, and 2) able to pass DOT physical.

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